IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Please amend the following claims.

Claims 1-176 (CANCELLED).

177.   (Currently Amended) A data management system, comprising:

a data management server system that receives a source file for registration and a target file for comparison with the source file;

a key generation system that generates a key for the source file by identifying a predetermined number of source elements in the source file as first source elements;

a source print generation system that applies said key to the source file and that extracts the first source elements from the source file in accordance with said key;

a data embedding system that embeds an information block into the source file, said information block including information pertaining to ownership of intellectual property rights;

a database system that stores the source file with the embedded information block, said key, the first source elements, and ownership information of the source file; and

a source print detection system that automatedly searches one or more portions of the target file for the occurrence of one or more compares the first source elements with corresponding target elements in the target file in accordance with said key and that assigns a probability matching level to the target file;

wherein, if said probability matching level is greater than a predetermined matching threshold, the data management system accesses said ownership information to notify an owner of the source file, and the source file and the target file are visually compared to determine a level of similarity between the source file and the target file.

178. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 177, wherein said database system is at least partially incorporated with said data management server system.

179. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 177, wherein said source print generation system extracts the first source elements being defined by element characteristics selected from the group consisting of an element size, an element start position, and an element initial position relative to said element start position.

180. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 177, wherein said information block includes user-defined information.

181. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 180, wherein said user-defined information is at least partially encrypted.

182. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 177, wherein said information block includes information selected from the group consisting of copyright information, trademark information, licensing information, mandatory compliance information, authorized user information, authorized website information, a file description, and at least one file attribute.

183. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 182, wherein said mandatory compliance information includes information selected from the group consisting of identification information, age information, custodial information, and other mandatory information required by law for image data.

184. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 177, wherein said data management system is in communication with at least one external computer system.

185.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 184, wherein said data management server system provides the source file with said embedded information block to authorized users associated with one or more of the at least one external computer system.

186.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 184, wherein said source print detection system includes a search member that searches one or more of the at least one external computer system for target files to be compared with the source file.

187.   (Currently Amended) A method for managing data, comprising:

receiving a source file for registration;

generating a key for the source file by identifying a predetermined number of source elements in the source file as first source elements;

applying said key to the source file;

extracting the first source elements from the source file in accordance with said key;

embedding an information block into the source file, said information block including information pertaining to ownership intellectual property rights;

storing the source file with the embedded information block, said ~~first~~ key, the first source elements, and ownership information of the source file;

receiving a target file for comparison with the source file;

automatedly <u>searching one or more portions of the target file for the occurrence of one or more</u> ~~comparing the~~ first source elements ~~with corresponding target elements in the target file~~ in accordance with said ~~first~~ key;

assigning a probability matching level to the target file; and

if said probability matching level is greater than a predetermined matching threshold,

accessing said ownership information to notify an owner of the source file; and

visually comparing the source file and the target file to determine a level of similarity between the source file and the target file.

188.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 187, wherein said generating said key includes providing at least one data parameter associated with a selected characteristic of said key and incorporating said at least one data parameter into said ~~first~~ key.

189. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 188, wherein said providing said at least one data parameter includes providing said at least one parameter selected from the group consisting of a predetermined number of source elements, an element size, an element start position, an element initial position relative to said element start position, an element type, and an element length.

190. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said extracting the source elements includes extracting the source elements from the source file having data in a compressed format.

191. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 190, wherein said extracting the source elements includes expanding the data of the source file.

192. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said extracting the source elements includes forming a concatenated string of the source elements.

193. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said extracting the source elements includes normalizing data of the source file and extracting the normalized data from the source file.

194. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said embedding said information block includes at least partially encrypting said information block.

195. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said receiving said source file includes communicating with an external computer system.

196.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 195, further comprising searching one or more of the at least external computer system for target files to be compared with the source file.

197.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 195, further comprising providing the source file with said embedded information block to authorized users associated with one or more of the at least one external computer system.

198.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said extracting the first source elements comprises extracting the first source elements from the source file via compression specific element extraction.

199.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 187, wherein said extracting the first source elements comprises extracting the first source elements from the source file via non-compression specific element extraction.

200.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 199, wherein said receiving the source file includes receiving a source file with a plurality of data values, and wherein said extracting the first source elements includes calculating an average value of the data values for each of the first source elements.

201.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 200, wherein said receiving a source file includes receiving a video source file with a plurality of red-green-blue (RGB) data values, and wherein said calculating the average value of the data values comprises calculating an average value of the RGB data values for each of the first source elements.